

A
BRIEF VIEW
OF ALL THE
MATERIAL FACTS NECESSARY TO A FULL UNDERSTANDING
OF THE
LONG CONTESTED QUESTION
RESPECTING
A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE DELAWARE DIVISION
AND
DELAWARE AND RARITAN CANALS.

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OUT-LET LOCK IN THE DELAWARE DIVISION.

Extract from the Report of the Committee on Inland Navigation and Internal Improvement, made 21st February, 1844:

“From Easton, at the mouth of the Lehigh, the Delaware division extends along the western bank of the river, to Morrisville, fifty miles; thence to Bristol, ten miles further, where it terminates in a large and spacious basin, connecting with tide water, with every facility for loading into larger vessels. On the east side of the Delaware, and running parallel with our State canal, is the feeder of the Delaware and Raritan canal, constructed by a company in New Jersey, and extending from nearly opposite Black’s Eddy to Trenton. The out-let lock is designed to enable boats to pass from the Pennsylvania canal, across the river into the navigable feeder belonging to this foreign corporation, thus rendering it a formidable rival to this portion of our State improvement; as on every boat passing through the out-let lock, the tolls due for thirty-five miles from Black’s Eddy to Bristol, would be surrendered to that rival, and lost to Pennsylvania. In addition to this, it should be remembered, that the quantity of water drawn from the Delaware division, by the passage of boats through the out-let lock, may, at certain seasons, prove a serious detriment to the navigation of that portion of the canal below Black’s Eddy, inasmuch as no material supply is afforded between that point and Wells’ Falls, below Newhope. Boats would thus be compelled to pass through the out-let lock into the river, for want of water to continue their course to Bristol; for every lock full of water exhausted from the canal at Black’s Eddy, flowing into the river, would be lost to the navigation on the levels below. The lower section of the Delaware division would thus become comparatively useless, and its benefits to the trade of a fertile and populous portion of the State, as well as the revenue to be derived from it by the Commonwealth, would be in a great measure lost, if not totally annihilated. It is said the coal trade would be materially benefitted by the construction of the out-let lock at Black’s Eddy. If this be the real object, why have those who profess to expect such great advantages from this measure, so long neglected to erect wharves, and construct simple machinery for transshipping coal from canal boats, at Black’s Eddy, into boats which might cross the river, and thus pass the feeder of the Delaware and Raritan canal? This, it is believed, could be done at a small expense, and thus the advantages of transportation to New York, in larger vessels than those admitted by the limited capacity of our canal, would be secured without the necessity of descending so far as Bristol. Or is it that ulterior, and other purposes, are entertained, than the alleged advantages to be derived to the coal trade of this portion of the State? We are unwilling to believe that there is a combination of chartered monopolies, whose designs, if allowed to be carried into execution, will divert the trade from that portion of the Delaware division below Black’s Eddy, carrying it thence to the eastern market, on the works of a rival corporation; thus superseding, and rendering unproductive, a canal which has cost the State nearly two millions of dollars, and which, if left to carry the trade that must naturally seek that channel, may yet not only pay the interest on its cost, but at no very distant day, if properly managed, may yield an additional revenue to the Commonwealth. If an out-let lock be of so much importance, the committee are at a loss to perceive why one at Morrisville, affording a communication with the Delaware and Raritan, at or near Trenton, would not be produc-

tive of the desired result. The State of Pennsylvania would then lose only the tolls upon ten miles of her canal, instead of thirty-five, which would be the case if the out-let were at Black's Eddy; but the Delaware and Raritan company, would lose the revenue upon the whole length of their feeder—twenty-four miles—which they expect to gain by the Black's Eddy out-let."

The preceding extract from the report of the Committee on Inland Navigation and Internal Improvement is prefixed, because it correctly and fairly states the facts and arguments as to an out-let at Black's Eddy. One of these facts, viz: the effect of the out-let at that place on the supply of water for the Delaware division, between Black's Eddy and the feeder, at Wells' falls, ten miles below, may be rendered more conclusive, by a comparison of the dimensions of the proposed out-let lock, with those on the Delaware division. All agree that wherever the out-let is made, it should correspond with the locks on the Lehigh, looking to the future improvement of the canal. Those locks are one hundred feet by twenty-two. The lift at Black's Eddy is seventeen feet; the lock would therefore contain $(100 + 22 + 17)$ 37,400 cubic feet of water; those on the Delaware division are $90 + 11 + 7$, and contain 6,900 cubic feet. Five and one-half times more water is therefore required to pass a boat through the out-let, than through the Delaware division, and as the supply is now scanty in a dry season, it is clear that if such an out-let be made at that place, the Delaware division will be dried up, not only "at certain seasons," but at all times, from thence to the feeder at Wells' Falls, ten miles; and unless this objection can be removed, the scheme of an out-let ought to be forever abandoned.

There are, however, some facts and circumstances that could not have been fully before the committee, which, when properly appreciated, must lead to a conclusion, though not at variance with theirs, yet essentially modified. The committees' conclusion is, that there ought not to be an out-let at Black's Eddy, because it will exhaust the water from the Delaware division, and transfer its whole business at that point to a rival canal of a foreign company, not from choice, but necessity, which they have fully established. But it does not follow, that because an out-let at Black's Eddy would have this effect, other places may not be found for it, which will leave the Delaware division fully supplied with water, and the capacity of passing all the coal and other trade through it to Bristol, which can be beneficially sent there. These are the points to be considered, and also whether any substitute for an out-let can be devised; the last suggestion will be first noticed. The only substitutes yet thought of, are, raising the boats by machinery over the banks of the canal into the river, or transshipping the coal into boats coming from the Delaware and Raritan feeder; the latter could be done at a small expense, with allowance for waste, and would long since have been tried, but the Delaware and Raritan feeder is not navigable at the upper end. The water in it, is, for a considerable distance, too shallow, by two or three feet, for the boats now used on the Delaware division. The towing-path bank which is next the river, is overflowed at common high water for several miles, from three to six weeks every spring, and at other times; and vast quantities of alluvial sand are annually deposited at the upper end of the feeder, requiring the almost constant employment of a dredging machine to remove it. The company have declined making their feeder navigable, or to give any assurance that they would do so, except *on the condition that an out-let be first made at Black's Eddy*, from which, and the remarkable perseverance of some other interests in favor of a connexion at that place, to the exclusion of every other, it has been inferred elsewhere, as well as by the Committee of Inland Navigation and Internal Improvement, that "ulterior and other purposes are entertained, than the alleged advantages to the coal trade." It would, no doubt, be highly advantageous to the Jersey company, to be permitted to tap the Delaware division at Black's Eddy, ten miles *above* its feeder, exhaust its water, and thereby force all its vast trade into their canal. Be this as it may, there is no prospect of a substitute for an out-let being made available at this time; the expense and difficulty of making the feeder navigable are serious obstacles. Can such an out-let be made elsewhere, and free from all these objections to Black's Eddy? A connexion made between the two canals at any point *below the feeder at Wells' Falls*, avoids all difficulty as to the supply of water for the Delaware division, to Bristol, as

any desirable quantity of water could be supplied by that feeder—which seems to settle the question as to the preference for such a position for the out-let. The Delaware division being kept fully supplied with water to Bristol, would render abortive every scheme for forcing the business into the Delaware and Raritan canal, by any “combination of chartered monopolies” which might have designs of that nature; in fact, a combination for such a purpose, could only be available with an out-let *above the feeder*; and the concurrence of the Delaware and Raritan company, and all the other interests concerned in the establishment of a connexion *below the feeder*; is a guarantee that if such purposes have been entertained, they are now abandoned. The Delaware division thus kept open, which it is hoped may at no distant day be made navigable for one hundred and fifty ton steamboats, will, with proper guardianship, remain throughout its whole line, an unrivalled out-let for the products of the Lehigh mountains and vallies, which will forever defeat any schemes of monopoly that may be contrived.

In the meantime, it may be observed, that the war now being waged between the Schuylkill navigation, and Reading railroad companies, to try “which can do the other the most harm,” has so reduced the tolls and other expenses on coal, from Pottsville to New York, that it is impossible to bring coal from the Lehigh into competition, by some forty cents per ton. The Lehigh coal, which would otherwise go to New York, *must therefore lie in the mines*, until a cheaper route can be found than the present one. This can only be done by passing into the Delaware and Raritan feeder, and saving the twenty-seven miles of circuitous voyage down to Bristol and back again, through Bordentown, &c. Hence it is, that a connexion for the passage of all coal intended for the New York market, is so important. To illustrate this fact more fully, let it be supposed that one hundred thousand tons from the Lehigh may, by reason of cheaper transportation, be sent through the out-let to the New York market, which would otherwise be supplied from other places. The tolls on this coal, say \$20,000 to \$25,000, would be clear gain to Pennsylvania. And that such would be the case, cannot be questioned; for no person will buy Lehigh coal, who can get it from Schuylkill at forty, or thirty, or twenty cents per ton less.

As to the particular site for making the connexion with the Delaware and Raritan feeder, it is not necessary to discuss it here; there is a range from the head of Wells’ Falls to Morrisville. The condition of the water, the lockage, security against floods, expense of the entrance from the river on both sides, and facility of crossing, will be subjects for skilful engineers and mutual arrangement; which, if entered upon in a proper spirit, on both sides, will no doubt be arranged to the mutual advantage of all who are interested.

S. D. INGHAM,

In behalf of the Hazleton, and other Coal Companies, on the Lehigh.

